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ABSTRACT

This report was designed for teachers and teacher educators who, in their teaching, curricula, and relationships with students, struggle with fundamental cultural questions: Who are my students? What kinds of cultural influences shape their lives? How do they and I shape and construct this culture on an ongoing basis? and What are my own cultural assumptions and how do they influence my teaching? This publication was developed after a 2-day institute in which teachers, teacher educators, and anthropologists collaborated to create ways of answering these questions. The purpose of this publication is to provide suggestions to assist teachers in personalizing culture--that is, moving away from broad generalizations about cultures or ethnic groups and toward specific knowledge about individual students and families. It includes sections on understanding contemporary concepts of culture, enhancing cultural self-knowledge, learning about others as cultural beings and applying this learning to parent involvement, curriculum, and advocacy agendas. By grounding cultural knowledge and behavior in the everyday experiences of students, families, and teachers, rather than in broad generalizations and stereotypes about groups, teachers can make strong connections between students' prior experiences and the school curriculum, thus enhancing students' engagement in the learning process. (Contains 24 references.) (Author/SM)

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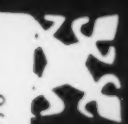

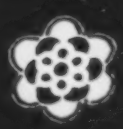

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EDUCATIONAL PRACTICE REPORT

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PERSONALIZING CULTURE THROUGH ANTHROPOLOGICAL AND EDUCATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

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PERSONALIZING CULTURE THROUGH ANTHROPOLOGICAL AND EDUCATIONAL PERSPECTIVES

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CENTER FOR RESEARCH ON EDUCATION, DIVERSITY & EXCELLENCE (CREDE)

The Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence is funded by the Office of Educational Research and Improvement of the U.S. Department of Education to assist the nation's diverse students at risk of educational failure to achieve academic excellence. The Center is operated by the University of California, Santa Cruz, through the University of California's statewide Linguistic Minority Research Project, in collaboration with a number of other institutions nationwide.

The Center is designed to move issues of risk, diversity, and excellence to the forefront of discussions concerning educational research, policy, and practice. Central to its mission, CREDE's research and development focus on critical issues in the education of linguistic and cultural minority students and students placed at risk by factors of race, poverty, and geographic location. CREDE's research program is based on a sociocultural framework that is sensitive to diverse cultures and languages, but powerful enough to identify the great commonalities that unite people.

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ABSTRACT

This Educational Practice Report was designed for teachers and teacher educators who, in their teaching, curricula, and relationships with students, are struggling with fundamental cultural questions: Who are my students? What kinds of cultural influences shape their lives? How do they and I, as their teacher, shape and construct this culture on an ongoing basis? What are my own cultural assumptions and how do they influence my teaching? This publication was developed after a two-day institute in San Francisco in which teachers, teacher educators, and anthropologists worked together to create ways of answering these questions. Our purpose is to provide suggestions that will assist teachers in personalizing culture—that is, moving away from broad generalizations about cultures or ethnic groups and toward specific knowledge about individual students and families. It includes sections on understanding contemporary concepts of culture, enhancing cultural self-knowledge, learning about others as cultural beings and applying these learnings to parent involvement, curriculum, and advocacy agendas. By grounding cultural knowledge and behavior in the everyday experiences of students, families, and teachers, rather than in broad generalizations and stereotypes about groups, teachers can make strong connections between students' prior experiences and the school curriculum, thus enhancing students' engagement in the learning process.

INTRODUCTION

This report is written primarily for teachers and teacher educators who, in their teaching, curricula, and relationships with students, are struggling with fundamental cultural questions: Who are my students? What kinds of cultural influences shape their lives? How do they — and I, as their teacher — shape and construct this culture on an ongoing basis? What are my own cultural assumptions and how do they influence my teaching?

Much has been written about how schools should respond to the needs of diverse learners and how teachers should alter curricula and teaching practices to accommodate them. We do not intend to reiterate what has already been accomplished in this area. Rather, this report covers ground that we think has been less well covered — namely, the personalization of culture and how it can enhance teaching and learning. These pages represent a distillation of ideas and strategies shared in 1996 at a two-day institute for teachers and anthropologists.[1]

Many teachers realize that a key to creating a successful learning environment for all students is to tap into the prior knowledge and skills that students bring to school and to make connections between their prior knowledge and new knowledge. Norma González (1996) confirmed this:

> **Our experience indicates that when the children's background is recognized and incorporated into the classroom, children's motivation and engagement in the learning process increases dramatically. This is a necessary condition for improving students' achievement across all areas of the curriculum, including language arts, critical thinking skills, mathematics, and scientific inquiry.**

When teachers and students share similar cultural and linguistic backgrounds, making these connections is easier, because teachers already have some fairly well-grounded information about the child's culture. For example, they might already know what kinds of activities families participate in on weekends, what kinds of work parents do, and how discipline tends to be handled in the home. Gaps in the teacher's knowledge can readily be filled in by asking parents, who speak the same language as the teacher. On the other hand, when teachers do not have a background similar to their students', they may lack cultural information that is relevant to teaching these children. Worse yet, they may rely on stereotypes and generalizations to inform curricular and pedagogical decisions. Information and strategies for acquiring accurate information may not be readily apparent, and "even if it were possible for teachers to learn enough about the cultural background of each student, this can lead to the trap of essentialism" (Spindler, 1996), in which we expect all children of a particular cultural background to act in a certain way. Many teachers wonder where they can turn for strategies and ideas that make meaningful use of culture in the classroom.

The purpose of this report is to provide suggestions that will assist teachers in personalizing culture – that is, in moving away from broad generalizations about cultures toward specific knowledge about individual students and families, and toward awareness of the teacher's own culture. Through this personalization of culture, students' prior knowledge and skills can become a rich resource for teaching and learning. We view this as part of the larger effort to create culturally responsive schools. In the following paragraphs, we foreshadow five themes and related assumptions that frame our suggestions for personalizing culture.

Exploring the ways that teachers and anthropologists can work together

Teachers and anthropologists share a deep interest in culture. Teachers have much to offer anthropologists, because they find themselves in the crucible of cultural change. They are in a unique position to view the acquisition of contemporary U.S. youth culture by new generations of immigrants as well as the continuity of home cultures when schools make that possible. But teachers are much more than observers. They can play an active role in facilitating the change process as students move among home, peer, and school cultures, adapting this and shedding that, ultimately creating their own personal culture—known as propriospect (Wolcott, 1991)—as well as sharing in the larger youth culture. Given contemporary anthropological interest in cultural borders and cultural change processes, teachers' insights about these issues are of great value.

Anthropologists have something to offer teachers as well. Unfortunately, anthropological understandings of culture rarely find their way into schools and classrooms, perhaps because anthropologists have not tried hard enough to break out of the "ivory tower," or perhaps because education's need for new ways of thinking about culture did not seem acute until recently. More often than not, concepts of culture used in schools tend to take the tourist approach, focusing on the more superficial aspects of culture, such as heroes, holidays, and highlights. Even well-intended efforts to familiarize teachers with particular cultural groups often do more to stereotype the people in question than to provide any meaningful learning about culture. We have probably all seen handouts in which two cultures are contrasted: "We" do it this way, and "they" do it that way. The ways of the "other" group are frequently seen through the lens of western biases and thus appear strange or exotic. For example, some Asian students, unlike European American students, tend to avert their eyes when talking to a teacher. If we stop at the level of behavior, we may never understand the underlying concept of deference which gives meaning to this behavior. Contemporary anthropological notions of culture try to understand how people make meaning within their community and how these "webs of significance" give rise to behaviors and attitudes.

Understanding culture as a process

Efforts to integrate multiculturalism in schools have tended to focus mainly on the *content* of culture and paid little attention to *processes of learning about* culture. We believe that by integrating knowledge of cultural content—which by its nature will always be incomplete—with skill in the processes of learning about culture, educators stand a better chance of building upon the resources that all students bring with them to school. These resources include not only the general beliefs, behaviors, and values that teachers hear about when they attend workshops about other cultures, but also the specific, little-known cultural resources that are unique to individuals, families, and communities — resources that teachers will not learn about in a workshop on the Hispanic child. For example, while it may be useful for a European American teacher to know that in Mexico, many girls celebrate their 15th year with a *quinceañera* — a special birthday celebration— it is also important to know that in a particular Mexican American girl's home here in the United States, candymaking is a family industry. Embedded within this family practice lies the possibility for connecting to curriculum in the areas of math, nutrition, business, and so forth. The ethnographic fieldwork methods of cultural anthropology provide a framework from which teachers can take and adapt many ways to learn about the everyday, lived culture of students and their families.

Understanding conflict and power in classrooms

Educators often see conflict as something to be avoided. "Teachers fear conflict. We don't know how we will react to it" (Institute participant). Likewise, many educators are uncomfortable talking about unequal power relations (Delpit, 1995). Yet the conflict and differential power relations that are embedded in almost every social situation are particularly important in culturally diverse classrooms. Conflict is inherent in different cultural belief systems, as when a student from another country realizes that students in U.S. schools are expected to speak up and find their own voice, whereas in his home country he was taught that a student's role is to be quiet and listen to the teacher (Lucas, 1997). Differences in institutional power permeate the roles of teacher vis-à-vis students, as well as the teacher's own role in the educational hierarchy of paraprofessionals, classified staff, parents, administrators, district staff, school board, county staff, state curriculum developers, and text book developers. Thus, when educators begin to seriously examine culture in their teaching and learning, cultural sharing is only part of the issue. While all cultures are equal in the sense that they have developed as successful ways to adapt to the environment and survive as a people, they are not all equal in their place in schools or in the larger U.S. society. When educators discuss cultural relations in a classroom setting, especially among older students, they need to acknowledge the relations of dominance and subordination that are often embedded in cross-cultural relations. These conflicts and the power relations that give rise to them need to be included, not avoided, in our efforts to learn about culture and its many influences on students and teachers.

Creating safe environments for discussion

In order to foster discussion about issues such as conflict or power, along with less emotionally charged topics relating to cultural values and practices, teachers need to establish an environment in which students feel comfortable expressing their views. Several strategies can be employed. For example, teachers can validate the knowledge of students at the outset through an activity where they create shared understandings of topics to be addressed, such as culture or ethnicity (see, e.g., *Give One Get One* handout in the appendix). Teachers can use self-disclosure as a way to humanize themselves and model the process of honest reflection. Another way in which many teachers establish safe conditions for dialogue is by setting up ground rules at the outset. For example, the class might agree that no individuals should dominate the conversation, that students have a right to pass if they do not want to share certain things about themselves, and that the opinions of others should be respected even if they disagree.

Educating for advocacy and activism

Educators who care about students and want all students to have equitable access to the resources and power of education have to struggle to make that possible. Learning about culture is part of the process in that it enables teachers to personalize the learning experience, basing it on the students' own prior knowledge and skills. This enables students to more easily make connections between home knowledge and school knowledge. However, many advocates for children feel that these classroom practices don't go far enough, and that teachers also need to become advocates and activists to transform the status quo in schools. This is consistent with Banks (1993), Lee (1995), Tatum (1997), and others who point out that schools need to move beyond being merely multicultural to being places where students and adults are encouraged and supported in analyzing the root causes of social problems (such as the poor condition of many inner city schools) and learning how to take action to change these

problems. Some examples are outlined later in this paper. (See "Applying Learning About Culture to Education.")

CONCEPTS OF CULTURE

It is difficult to talk about culture or develop plans for learning about another culture without first wrestling with the meaning of this term. Although it is the cornerstone of cultural anthropology, anthropologists themselves do not agree on a shared meaning. It is no surprise, then, that people who think anthropologists should have a handy definition are nonplussed when they learn that huge verbal struggles take place over this concept. Some anthropologists have even suggested doing away with it entirely (e.g., Wolcott, 1991).

In the past, anthropologists and others assumed that culture was a kind of package deal; cultures were believed to have neat boundaries, inside of which were all sorts of traditions and structures, such as marriage practices, gender roles, religion, death rituals, childrearing practices, language, power and authority structures, food, and so forth.

> **In the 1940's, when I began my fieldwork, everybody knew what culture was — culture was what everybody had in a predictable, bounded sense; everyone recognizable by their laundry list of cultural traits. (Spindler, 1996)**

Culture was believed to exist outside the person and to exert a strongly deterministic role in people's lives; that is, culture provided rules for living, and there wasn't a whole lot one could do about it. Individuals were seen as passive recipients of culture. Furthermore, older assumptions cast culture in a static role. It didn't seem to change much; in fact, many anthropologists focused their work on explaining how and why cultures persist over long periods of time. Anthropologists and others also assumed that the cultures of "others" could be described and analyzed in objective ways. The power of the (usually male) anthropologist and his interpretations generally went unexamined.

The one notion that seems to have persisted is that culture is learned; that is, it is not an inherited trait. Most other notions of culture are now hotly contested. Changing concepts of culture are beginning to take into account the following ideas, many of which can be found in Rosaldo (1989) and which we have elaborated on here. Note that some of these notions conflict with one another or at least take different perspectives.

- Culture is not tightly bounded for many contemporary urban groups. Very few people live in isolated, homogeneous communities anymore. In urban areas, *cultural borderlands*—areas where several cultural groups live side-by-side—are more the rule than the exception. Many of us would say we have bicultural, multicultural, or multiethnic identities.
- Within any given cultural group, there is tremendous variation. No individual in a cultural group possesses all of the cultural knowledge of that group. Cultural knowledge and behaviors vary with gender, age, status occupation, and many other factors.
- Living cultures are constantly changing. Because we actively construct culture, no living culture remains static. Although we acquire some aspects of culture through socialization, we are not simply passive recipients of culture. Youth culture provides a good example of the capacity we all have for creating new forms of culture.

- Much of our cultural knowledge is implicit. The anthropologist Clyde Kluchholn once said that the fish would be the last creature to discover water. What he meant is that culture, like water to the fish, is so all encompassing that we take it for granted. When we first attempt to understand another culture, we often begin by perceiving the most obvious aspects, such as food, clothing, and language. Likewise, when people ask us to describe our own culture, we are often unable to articulate much more than these outward manifestations. The more subtle aspects of culture—for example, the way we respond to a compliment— remain invisible unless we have experienced the internal conflict that comes from living in another culture or with someone who has a very different cultural background. These situations tend to make us more aware of our own as well as other people's culture.
- Some aspects of culture exist inside people. Some anthropologists believe that the most meaningful aspects of culture are within the person—that culture exists primarily in the "webs of significance" or meanings people bring to their experiences in the world (Geertz, 1973). According to interpretive anthopologists, shared ways of interpreting the world and our experiences in it are the essence of culture, more so than the outward manifestations in behavior. Thus, for example, knowing the cultural meaning of winking at someone as a way to communicate an inside joke is what's important, not the wink itself, which could mean something quite different in another culture.
- Other aspects of culture exist in everyday, lived practices. Sometimes called a processual approach to culture, this approach emphasizes culture as lived practices, rather than as meanings inside people's heads (Gonzalez, 1995b). One of the reasons for this approach is that people are not easily able to talk about or share what is inside their heads, particularly concerning their own culture. Thus, if teachers want to gain access to students' and families' household cultural knowledge as a means of personalizing learning in a culturally meaningful context, it is often more useful to focus on actual practices familiar to children than on what parents can say about their culture.
- Anyone who studies culture brings certain biases to the task. The role of the anthropologist or anyone else who studies culture is no longer seen as an objective one. Rather, anyone who describes, interprets, or explains cultural behavior or beliefs brings certain assumptions, lenses, and biases to the task. It is now becoming more common practice to state these so that others can understand how individual anthropologists' subjectivities may influence their interpretations. Along with stating these assumptions and being explicit about the biases or lenses through which they view reality, it is also important for anthropologists to describe and reflect on their role in the community they studied. Here we can see an analogy to teaching, in that teachers can view their own roles as merely transmitters of objective knowledge to students, or as agents of change who can help students learn to practice critical inquiry and social action to improve their world.

These changing ideas about culture make it clear that the concept is much more complex than was thought earlier. No single phrase or definition really captures the dimensions we have touched on above. However, there is agreement that culture is learned, and therefore is not synonymous with ethnicity, which has an inherited as well as a learned component to it. Another term that is often confused with culture is race. At one time it was believed that there were distinct human races, but physical anthropologists have shown that there is in fact more genetic variation within a supposed race than there is between races, so the idea of separate human races has been discredited (Montagu, 1942/1997). However, as we all know, race as a socially contructed category has been used to justify discrimination against various groups of people, as exemplified in the history of Black-White relations in the United States. (The

American Anthropological Association's published position on race can be viewed at their Web site, www.ameranthassn.org.)

LEARNING ABOUT CULTURE

The conventional wisdom, "To know others one must first know oneself," can be applied to culture learning as well as to general self-knowledge. For this reason, we focus first on the process of examining our own cultural assumptions, then on the process of learning about the culture of others.

Learning about ourselves as cultural beings

A quote from George Spindler aptly frames this topic:

> Human beings are seen as active agents in the construction of their own reality. Our realities coincide with the constructions of others or else there would be no dialogue. But any individual's "ideoverse," their idiosyncratic version of reality, never completely overlaps anyone else's. Consequently, in interpersonal relationships there are areas of agreement and disagreement. The more the culture is inside a person, the more the area of conflict and tensions may increase. (1996)

Spindler's premise is that it impossible for teachers to do justice to the constructed realities of so many different children of diverse social and cultural backgrounds. Often, the response to this impossibility is to fall back on a kind of universal humanity approach, which views all students as "just people" and asserts a colorblind and cultureblind ethic. "I don't see color" has become a common response for some teachers when they are asked how they work with students of different ethnic backgrounds. Unfortunately, though these teachers mean well, their attitude can serve to make some children feel that important aspects of their identity are invisible and perhaps shameful.

> Where do we turn? To the only thing left: the constructed reality of the teacher. How does the teacher view cultural difference? How does he she respond to what kids do? What is it about the teacher's culture that will cause him or her to respond in a certain way? That is what Cultural Therapy[2] is aimed at. Cultural Therapy is an effort to bring into focus at a level of attention and consciousness the teacher's own projections of culture; of culture acquired since childhood but which is particularly pertinent between teacher and children, and between children of different cultural backgrounds or personalities. (Spindler, 1996)

The culture of the teacher has many facets, but two are particularly important: *cultural knowledge* and *culture as perception*. Cultural knowledge entails the myriad things we know about how to participate in our (and others') cultures — for example, what a salad fork is for, when it is appropriate to embrace someone, and so forth. Culture as perception is about the way people see things as filtered through their own heads. The way we perceive or interpret the culture of another person or group often tells us more about our own culture than about theirs. For example, the perception that others are violating the norms of good table manners probably tells us more about our own ideas of good table manners than about the other people's sense of politeness while eating.

George and Louise Spindler's work in classrooms in Schoenhausen, Germany, and Roseville, Wisconsin, illustrate these ideas (Spindler, 1996). Perceptions of "what is going here" varied along cultural lines and by role groups. For example, a German administrator who viewed a videotape of a Roseville classroom perceived a "laid back"

quality, which made him reflect on the more regimented organization of German education, in which planning comes from central administration, whereas in Roseville teachers made their own plans. Differing concepts of teamwork were also exposed as the administrator noticed students working in teams in Roseville. He commented that this is not the German idea of education. Different concepts of the individual also came to light: "In the U.S., each child is taught to reach his own capacity, whereas in Germany the goal is to bring the individual up to the standards of the group."

Cultural Therapy. Teachers' observation skills are highly developed due to their constant need to watch kids and activities, but their cultural interpretation skills are much less well developed. In the process Spindler calls Cultural Therapy, the first step is to bring implicit cultural perceptions to recognition. This can be done by viewing similar kinds of activity in different cultural contexts, then noting one's perceptions and interpretations. This process, especially when guided by an experienced cultural interpreter, can reveal when and how our cultural lenses are actually allowing us to see certain things and not others, or when we are placing our own cultural interpretation on an activity that may have a quite different meaning to the actors. Norma González, in showing video footage of a Mexican family having a yard sale, called attention to the influence of our lenses:

> **Make the familiar strange. Forget about the givens and concentrate on all clues, make them stand out. Often there are gender differences in what is observed, i.e. men most often notice the truck in the video. What do you notice? How are you filtering information through your lens? We are the research tool, the research processor. Teachers should go in with questions, not answers. (1996)**

The second step in Cultural Therapy is to use these explicit recognitions to guide our action. For example, Spindler (1996) talked about the experience of Roger Harker, a teacher who, by reflecting on his own teaching and viewing videotapes from his classroom, came to recognize that he was not teaching 40% of the students in his class. "He was circulating around the minority children but was not teaching them. . . . He was a unicultural teacher [European American] who had no repertoire for handling non-European-American kids." When Spindler pointed this out to the teacher, he resisted at first but then slowly began to change his practice, adding more of a range of teaching repertoires so that he could reach all of the students.

Because teachers' own identities are so closely interwoven in the pedagogical process in the classroom, they can benefit from a process that enables them to step back to understand the effect of their involvement in their pedagogy. Ray McDermott's (1996) work in classrooms provides an example of how videotapes can be a valuable ethnographic tool to help us uncover the ways in which teaching can facilitate learning for some children and not for others. Teachers can use video recordings of their own classrooms as a way to view their own practices and reflect on such questions as, "Who is participating in my classroom? Who is not participating? Am I directing more questions to certain students?" Since we cannot otherwise view our own teaching, video provides an opportunity to view the classrooms we create in a calm setting, where we can see classroom practices unfold with fresh eyes and ask ourselves new questions. McDermott encourages us to reframe questions, asking not how students fail school but how schools fail students.

Cultural Therapy can be done collectively using video, interviews, and group discussion, or it may be done individually. The goal in both cases is to raise the level of culture from implicit to explicit, which then makes it possible to take proactive steps to change our perceptions and interpretations and take actions that will be more helpful for students and for ourselves.

Other strategies to develop self awareness. Genevieve Lau (1996) described her own experiences as a former foreign student in the United States from Hong Kong.

> **I used ethnographic techniques in my own struggle for survival and reality construction. In Hong Kong, the expectation of students had been to listen carefully to professors, whereas in the U.S. I found myself confused by the expectation that I was supposed to be an active participant in class discussions.**

At first, she took notes about what was happening inside her, observing that she had a "Chinese-American reticence to jump into conversations." She also engaged in participant observation to try to understand what the American students were doing. She questioned the meaning of class participation, recognizing that the concept as it was used in U.S. classrooms was foreign to her. She realized that she needed to acquire a new understanding of this concept.

Learning about ourselves as cultural beings can also lead to questioning the structures that schools impose on students and families. Genevieve's reflections about her own experiences as an immigrant student pointed out that "the problem of participation is in the structure of the classroom —with only 50 minutes you can't spend the necessary time. The structures we find ourselves in pose these particular requirements. When a snappy response is valued, who gets lost?" (Lau, 1996)

This raises the question of whether, in acquiring new attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors, we merely add to our already existing repertoire, or whether we replace and eventually lose our earlier cultural behaviors and attitudes. This is the dilemma of assimilation versus accommodation, similar to the difference between subtractive bilingualism (in which one replaces one's native language with the new language) and additive bilingualism (in which one maintains one's native language and adds a new language). Many educators express strong positions in favor of maintaining native cultural patterns and layering on additional ones so that one eventually has a wide repertoire to draw on depending on which cultural identity one chooses to enact in given circumstances. Unfortunately, the power and dominance of some cultural groups can make this difficult. Most non-mainstream cultural groups in the United States have consistently lost their native languages along with varying degrees of their native cultural patterns after three generations, due to the pressure to assimilate to mainstream norms and speak English. The agenda of the schools has been to homogenize students to the mainstream, not to promote the maintenance of immigrant, local, and indigenous cultures.

Moments of conflict can also provide an opportunity for heightening our self-awareness in the cultural realm. Such conflict can be external (between individuals or groups) or internal (within the self). For teachers who consider themselves bicultural, cross-cultural conflict can occur within the self. We can tune in to these moments of internal conflict, asking ourselves why the conflict is occurring. Perhaps different cultural values are at odds? How we have dealt with these conflicts in the past? Does one cultural self tend to overshadow the other? Does it depend on the situation? Which situations tend to bring these conflicts to the foreground?

The homily, "Know thyself before you try to know others," raises the question of whether one has to reach a certain level of self-awareness before one starts to work on learning about other cultures. In practice, the two processes are interwoven and ongoing. Emphasis needs to be placed on self-reflection, however, because often this is overlooked in the rush to learn about what we perceive as exotic or strange. Focusing only on the other can make educators forget that they are themselves cultural beings whose culture influences what they do in the classroom and how they perceive students. No one is cultureless.

Teachers who regularly reflect on their own cultural perceptions, interpretations, and blind spots can also share these reflections with students, modeling for them that it is not only acceptable to think about one's own cultural blind spots but that it can be instructive. We learn by doing this and gradually become better at making cultural interpretations through reflection and practice. As Edmundo Norte (1996) put it, "We don't learn by experience; we learn by reflecting on our experience."

Learning about others as cultural beings

Learning about the culture of others is the natural extension of the previous section on learning about ourselves as cultural beings. We believe that investigating culture close up is a key aspect of achieving a more equitable and culturally responsive pedagogy, an important goal for educators who view education as a transformative process.

There are a variety of ways in which teachers and schools can gain knowledge about their students' cultural backgrounds and experiences. The following section provides suggestions that will enable teachers to gain knowledge from both student and family perspectives. All of the explorations into the cultural backgrounds of students and their families must, of course, be done in an environment of trust. As described in the introduction, this theme is as relevant here as it is to the idea of personal cultural exploration discussed in the previous section. Teachers who demonstrate honest interest in the cultural experiences of their students and families and enter into their investigations as learners will be able to make the connections they need to gain the knowledge about culture that will enhance their teaching.

Family Visits: One place to begin explorations of the culture of others is by making connections to the families of students. The Funds of Knowledge Project (González, 1995a), informed by anthropological research strategies, is a successful model that can be applied or adapted by teachers and school communities not only to understand the cultures of the students they teach, but also to forge closer connections with the families. The project is based on the following assumptions:

1. All students are capable learners.
2. There is certain knowledge that has traditionally been privileged, and it is this privileged knowledge that is given precedence in the classroom.
3. Homes of students traditionally labeled as "at risk" are not deficient or lacking in cognitive resources. They are full of rich resources that may be different from what we commonly think of as academically enriching experiences. Every home possesses academically valid knowledge which can be utilized to benefit all children in the classroom.
4. Teachers are capable of entering their students' homes as ethnographers and taking what they have learned back to their classrooms to influence their curricular and pedagogical practices.

Learners from non-mainstream backgrounds have often been seen as deficient, because they do not possess the experiences and cultural knowledge that our educational system expects children to bring to their schooling. This project transcends such a deficit perspective by viewing households in their multifaceted complexity and as a rich repository of funds of cultural knowledge.

Central to the project are home visits. The teacher is the learner in the visit, and the child and family are the experts. Teachers are not looking for normative cultural behaviors that are supposedly typical of a particular group. Instead, they are looking for what is practiced in the homes; this is the operational definition of culture. Children are seen as active participants in the activities of the home, not as passive bystanders. Teachers

access the households of their students with a series of questions about daily activities, keeping in their minds the basic question, "What's going on here?" They are interested in the everyday kinds of activities in which people's lives are embedded. This is an example of a practice-oriented approach to culture because it consists of observing and understanding what people do. It contrasts with a more abstract understanding of culture based upon how people talk about, but may not experience, their sense of their culture. The applications of this approach to curriculum will be discussed in more detail later in this report. (See "Applying Learnings About Culture to Education".)

Some teachers may at first feel reluctant to make family visits, perhaps because of concerns that parents may be defensive about allowing a teacher to come to the home, or because they fear they will not be safe in the neighborhoods of their students. González suggested that we examine these preconceptions and question whether they are in fact cultural blinders that stand in the way of moving forward into new cultural realms.

Ethnographic observations, interviews, and the use of visuals. In addition to getting to know students' families, teachers can make it a priority to get to know their communities, especially if the teacher does not live in the same community. Michèle Foster (1996) suggests a number of simple things that can be done that result in personalizing the culture of a particular neighborhood or community, including riding the buses, shopping in the local stores, attending community events, and spending time in local parks. *Direct observations* in these locations may or may not have a specific focus. Foster reports that she often pays attention to mother/child interactions and how others who are not mothers (e.g., Sunday School teachers, workers at the local YMCA, etc.) relate with children. She suggests writing notes either on the spot or shortly after the activities are completed. These notes can be used to jot down observations as well as interpretations of the meanings of what we have observed. It is often instructive to compare earlier notes with later ones to see how our interpretations have changed or grown more complex as we spend more time in the community. In connecting observations to teaching practice, Foster indicated that if teachers know something about the lives of students outside of school — where they go, what they do, who the people in their lives are — they can make stronger personal and curricular connections.

Another method of understanding the culture of students also uses an anthropological research practice, that of the *ethnographic interview*. This kind of interview allows the members of the culture to tell their story from their own perspective, because the questions are framed in a very open-ended way. Questions are asked in such a way that people can talk about what is important to them.

- What kind of things happen in this neighborhood (or family) on a regular basis?
- Who are the most influential people in the neighborhood and why do you feel they are influential?

In selecting people to interview, the following question-posing techniques can be helpful: "Who tells really great stories in your neighborhood?" "Who should I talk to in order to learn about your neighborhood?"

Language issues often come up when preparing for interviews or family visits. Although ideally ethnographers have a working knowledge of the language of the people they are interviewing, it is possible to ask a bilingual person to come along and help interpret. In some cases, this could be a bilingual teacher or paraprofessional who works in the same school. This kind of service should be appreciated in a way that is meaningful to that person.

Another way to bring students' cultural knowledge into school is through various kinds of mapping. A *community mapping* activity with a personal focus engages students in drawing maps of their neighborhoods. They then compare maps and talk about favorite places, places they avoid and why, and where they go in the neighborhood on a daily or frequent basis. This activity provides a concrete way to immerse young children in an exploration of their neighborhoods, and the discussion it generates can help teachers to understand some of the cultural practices and values of the students.

Another mapping strategy is known as *assets mapping*. Older students can be involved in the process of identifying and mapping the resources in their school or neighborhood community. An operational definition of a resource emerges from this activity and is part of gaining an understanding of the nature of the culture that is being mapped. It indicates to others what the members of the community consider resources important to their personal and cultural survival and well-being.

Archival research, advocated by Foster (1996) is a specialized kind of mapping. School records, census data, and life histories of local residents are examples of archival material that can enable teachers to map the communities in which their students live. Neighborhood libraries are good initial sources of archival data.

Writing or discussion activities with students that tap into their sense of their own culture can be prompted by asking students to respond to questions such as, "Who are you?" "What is it like to be you?" "What is your favorite family story?" "How did you get your name?" "How do you like people to refer to your culture or ethnicity (e.g., Hispanic, Latino, Chicano, Puerto Rican) and why do you prefer this term?" Such questions and related activities, when adjusted for the developmental level of the students, make cultural knowledge explicit both to the asker and to the teacher and other students who read or listen to the response.

A different approach from those that focus on paper and pencil tasks can be taken by using *visual explorations of culture*. Looking at a picture together is less confrontational than talking directly, because the focus is on the picture and not on the people talking. This change of focus makes the activity safer. Malcolm Collier (1996) discusses three kinds of images: existing (or found) images, non-photographic images (such as maps and drawings), and images made for the purposes of exploration. Students can be asked, for example, to share photos or drawings of their homes. What students choose to include often indicates values about home and family, and what is not included is also significant. Family photographs of birthdays and vacations are valuable tools for understanding family rituals and relationships, for example, who is present or absent from the photos, and what interactions and activities are depicted.

Students can also be given cameras or video recorders and assigned to photograph their own neighborhoods to produce images for a specific exploration. Engaging students in discussion to understand what they do and don't consider appropriate subject matter for their photos or video documentation enables the teacher to receive the insider view of their culture. These images can be compared to those that outsiders take of the same locale, thus making explicit some of the assumptions that people hold about their own culture.

There are a number of books on ethnographic methods which describe the techniques mentioned above in much more detail. For an introduction to qualitative research that is very readable and practical, see Glesne (1999).

Cross-cultural conflict as a source of learning. As teachers and students engage in the process of learning about the culture of others, sensitivity is required in order to be able

to process the new information at a level of understanding and acceptance. Conflict is inevitable and can be welcomed as a way for authentic understandings to be developed. Such conflict can be internal (within the self) or external (between individuals or groups). Some examples of internal conflicts were discussed in the earlier section that describes the process of cultural therapy. The role of internal conflict in generating authentic understanding can be understood through the response of a teacher to home visits. This teacher felt that the discomfort of being in an unfamiliar situation could cause teachers to be more aware of their surroundings and therefore be keener observers. The boundaries of what they know and understand are therefore expanded.

When conflicts arise between groups or individuals, they are often the result of misconceptions, and they should be pursued and cleared up rather than suppressed in the name of avoiding confrontation. Engaging in a dialogue to identify the nature of the misconception and to try to determine how it evolved is one strategy to consider. Sometimes, a person who is well acquainted with both cultural worlds can help the parties understand why a conflict arose or what differences in values or priorities may underlie the conflict. As we move away from the superficial, stereotypical, tourist approach to culture and engage in understanding culture in more complex ways, confusion arises and the potential for conflict increases. However, if we see the confusion as based on a more real assessment of the issues involved in multicultural education, the potential for positive change is also great.

Ethical Considerations. When gathering information through interviewing or home visits, one often gains access to personal information that may be sensitive, and therefore teachers as well as anthropologists need to consider some ethical issues. Following are some important questions to ask oneself: Is the information I have acquired confidential? Could anyone suffer harm or risk if I share this information? Have I informed people adequately about what I will do with this information? Ethnographers are required to inform their interviewees that information will be kept confidential, but teachers are in a somewhat different position if they are gathering information for possible use in the classroom. A good rule of thumb is to always ask if it is all right to share what you have learned with your class. This rule of thumb extends to using photographs of people in any context where it might offend a sense of family privacy, such as in sharing photographs of students' homes or families with a whole class of students. Sometimes teachers can handle this by asking parents to sign a release form at the beginning of the year to cover this sort of use, especially if a teacher plans to use visual images as an important teaching tool.

In using information and visual images from students' homes, teachers also have a responsibility to model sensitive responses to what is shared so that students can see appropriate response behavior. If students laugh or make fun of images, for example, the teacher must have suggestions for respectful responses.

APPLYING LEARNINGS ABOUT CULTURE TO EDUCATION

Once teachers have begun to acquire personal cultural knowledge and cultural knowledge about the students they teach, a natural progression is to look for ways to utilize this information in their classrooms. Questions arise about modifying curriculum to incorporate the cultural knowledge of their students, about how their pedagogy can be more sensitive to the cultural practices and experiences of students, and about how parent and community relationships might be reframed by their new cultural knowledge. Teachers' role as advocates for their students also becomes an issue.

Applications to parent/community involvement

Teachers who gain direct knowledge of their students' families and communities are in a position to apply this knowledge to help the school become a place where the cultural background of families and their children are valued. Certainly, the Funds of Knowledge Project is a comprehensive example. As described earlier, when teachers became learners about the specific cultures of their students' families, they were able to understand the homes and communities of their students not as environments of risk, but as repositories of rich cultural experiences that could be connected effectively to the school curriculum.

This contrasts sharply with the more traditional stance, held by many educators, that parents need to be educated about how to interact with their children and that schools should determine the nature of that education. If educators continually focus on what it is that parents need to be educated about, they unconsciously eliminate the possibility that parents have anything to teach teachers. Teachers and administrators often unconsciously privilege their own view about parent involvement as the "correct" way to understand and interact with parents. However, parents can also be privileged and encouraged to talk about how they view the school, what their hopes and dreams are for their children, and what they would like the school to do to help them achieve those dreams. Parents and other family members have information about their children's experiences and skills that is not typically accessed in classroom settings, but which may provide relevant connections to the curriculum. A child's skill in helping in a father's carpentry shop, for example, can be applied to measuring and computational activities in mathematics. A family member who is knowledgeable about herbs and plants can share this information when a class is learning about plants. Such experiences serve to personalize the notion of culture. Many connections to children's personal cultural experiences can be made if parents are encouraged to share family stories with teachers.

As we advocate learning about the cultures of the students we teach, we need also to examine the culture of the schools they attend. Are they environments that enact their mission statements of educational equity and cultural sensitivity? Do students and parents receive clear messages that diversity is valued and cultures are celebrated for their unique contributions to the character of the school? It may be necessary to rethink and revise practices that inadvertently prevent students and parents from connecting with the school. Using ideas for examining cultural awareness advanced under the umbrella of cultural therapy, educators may find appropriate forums such as faculty meetings, grade-level meetings, or department meetings where they can raise the assumptions embedded in their school culture to a level of explicit awareness, where they can be discussed and, if necessary, modified.

For example, in light of the current emphasis on standardized test outcomes as a way to gauge achievement, teachers may feel pressured to move away from the more integrative approaches described here. Frank discussions with other staff members about how to raise academic achievement without merely teaching to the test may provide useful clarification about the vision and goals of the school. If it is true that "we are what we measure," then schools that value students' cultures may need to find ways to gauge their success in this area.

A traditional barometer of parental involvement has been the number of parents who come to school for activities such as open house and conferences. By redefining parent involvement to include teachers going to the homes of students to seek information about incorporating cultural knowledge and practices into their curricula, the parent involvement tradition is changed in a way that benefits the family, the

student, and the entire class. If parent participation within the school building is considered essential, parents can be invited to participate by doing things they are comfortable doing, such as making food instead of listening to children read. One teacher in the Funds of Knowledge project received enthusiastic participation from a father when he was asked to share the songwriting talents she discovered he had during a visit to the family's home.

Applications to curriculum

In this report, curriculum is understood as all the experiences a student has in school, not only those explicitly structured through classroom materials or texts. This definition eliminates the distinction between curriculum (what is taught) and pedagogy (how it is taught). It also captures experiences outside the classroom, such as those during lunchtime, passing times, and in the counselor's office, that provide implicit lessons about the roles of students and the purposes of school, for example. The information that follows includes examples of applications that cut across disciplines and pedagogies. Many could be considered applications of what is known as the "hidden curriculum" (Jackson, 1968), those lessons taught to students indirectly through classroom procedures, organization, interactions, and policies.

Self disclosure. The lessons that students learn through the classroom climate are examples of the hidden curriculum. A classroom climate that students perceive as trusting and accepting promotes positive student identity as well as openness to new ideas. Some teachers use personal self-disclosure as a way to foster a trusting classroom climate. One teacher described how he discusses his cultural background and shows slides of the town in which he was raised as a way for students to begin to make connections with him that will form the foundation for trust. The teacher then follows this activity with others that enable students to describe themselves and define their own sense of their culture. One activity involves students in investigating the source of their names. It may be necessary for students to interview their parents or other family members to get the desired information; in the process, students often learn about family elders and family naming traditions that they can then share with the rest of the class.

Use of students' home language. When home language use in the classroom is encouraged, students get a message of acceptance of themselves and their cultural backgrounds. In such classrooms, students don't have to worry about acceptance being conditional on the use of a language with which they may not be comfortable. Bilingual programs institutionalize the use of two languages, but even in schools with no bilingual program, teachers can find numerous ways to make students' home languages a valued part of the classroom experience. Learning and using greetings in many languages helps to validate students' home languages. Teachers who, even though they aren't fluent in other languages, ask students how to say basic greetings and expressions help validate the students and also show them that teachers, like the students themselves, struggle with learning new languages. Developing activities in which students teach each other key greetings or phrases in each others' languages can create more respect and appreciation for differences among students.

Recognition of students' cultural practices. Seeing students as cultural beings, not just as repositories for the knowledge teachers wish to impart, will enable teachers to include recognition of students' cultural practices and cultural knowledge in the content of the curriculum. Students who are taught basic ethnographic interview research techniques can prepare mini-ethnographies in order to gather specific cultural knowledge that relates to a curricular topic. For example, interviews of family members to learn about how they experienced courtship could inform a social studies topic on family studies. The social studies topic of community interdependence can be studied through the community assets mapping activity described in the previous section.

Conocimiento (getting to know each other) is a strategy used for building community as a foundation for working together. It is also a way of incorporating students' own knowledge and experience into the curriculum. Advanced by Roberto Vargas (1986), it is based on the premise that whenever a group of people work together, it is important to have some shared common ground and a shared vision. This strategy accesses the knowledge base of the participants in contrast to introducing a topic with the "expert" knowledge of the teacher. It recognizes that participants bring prior knowledge with them to a learning situation and validates that knowledge as fundamental to further learning. A "give one/get one" activity is one way to do this. Participants are asked to write three responses to a question, and then exchange lists with another person. Each takes an idea from the other's list to add to their own, then finds another person to exchange lists with. This process is repeated for an allotted time period. Group sharing of ideas that are on participants' lists brings the group together and creates a body of shared knowledge upon which further learning and discussion are based. The question used might tap into content knowledge, such as, "What do you know about the solar system?" or it might access participants' responses to more abstract concepts, such as "What is your understanding of justice?" (See *Give One Get One Handout* in appendix.)

It is a given that as we divest ourselves of the tourist approach to multicultural education, the incorporation of cultural content in teaching will not be limited to the national observance months. African-American content will not be taught only in January, nor will Native Americans be studied only in November as an extension of the first Thanksgiving. The examples above that incorporate cultural knowledge into the general curriculum will be found throughout the school year and throughout the curriculum.

Community-based projects. Some teachers change their fundamental approach to curriculum and make the community's issues the focus. Community conflict or issues of community concern become a source of dialogue and a part of the curriculum. In an urban neighborhood, the issue of blight was addressed by several classrooms in one elementary school through the development of a community garden plot. The students were involved in all aspects of the project: getting permission to establish the garden on a city owned lot, planning the garden, raising the plants, and maintaining the plot through a combination of volunteer community and classroom labor. The Garden was a major focus that encompassed several traditional curricular areas. Depending on the issue and the nature of the context, the focus on community as curriculum can provide common ground for members of different cultures to work together, thus fostering intergroup cooperation.

Applications to advocacy agendas

Many educators who are concerned about accommodating the cultural backgrounds of students in their classrooms and schools also define themselves as advocates for change. They see the purpose of education not as maintaining the status quo in our society, but as a vehicle for social and cultural change that promotes a more equitable democracy. This is a very large agenda, one in which it can be difficult for individuals to see themselves participating effectively. Yet as one teacher pointed out, individuals are the ones who can make change. She emphatically illustrated this idea with her comment: "I cannot depend on districts and bureaucrats. I can't wait. The fight has to come from each individual." The hard work has to start in the schools with teachers making change in their own environments. To do this, networking is critical in order to build awareness among others that they, too, are stakeholders in the change endeavor. Effective local change agents are a part of the community and believe in the resources and resiliency of the people who live there to make systemic change.
The ground for change is cultivated by finding strengths, developing empathy and trust, and providing opportunities for dialogue that are safe, inviting, non-judgmental, validating, and honest. In such an environment, the reasons for resistance to change can be

addressed. Focusing on the positive attitudes of those involved is not adequate; issues of resistance also need to be made explicit so that barriers to change can be understood and addressed.

A number of advocacy strategies can be connected to the curriculum. Teachers have the ability to use the curriculum to advance the thinking of students and families. By using community issues as curriculum, as noted earlier, students can see their lives connected to larger issues such as social justice, environmental pollution, and others, and can begin to see how they might participate in transforming the society in which they live. The urban journal, *Rethinking Schools*, contains reports of many examples of teachers using the community as curriculum.

Even such a traditional classroom activity as reading a textbook can become part of a change agenda and foster critical thinking skills among students. For example, analyzing a social studies textbook to see how the contributions of different ethnic groups are placed (e.g., main text or special interest boxes or appendices) can enable students to question editorial decisions, then share their questions and concerns with decision makers. Student letters written to publishers about biased or inaccurate portrayal of ethnic groups give agency to those engaged in such an analysis project.

In some secondary school contexts, student clubs and organizations have helped to change attitudes and practices about race and ethnicity. Student groups have been able to present agendas for change through the structures of school governance. In one high school, for example, a racially motivated beating became an issue that students took up in an ethnic club. With the support of the teacher who was the club sponsor, they met with the principal and outlined their ideas on how to prevent such attacks in the future. Although not every idea they suggested was approved by the principal, some were. Adults who play roles such as club sponsors can help students negotiate the system and promote change, as this teacher did.

Parental support is also critical for advocacy. Teachers can and do engage parents as effective allies in their efforts to make change in schools. Lucinda Pease-Alvarez (1996) shared an example of a situation in which there was a discrepancy between policy and practice in the implementation of bilingual education. To help parents better understand what was at stake, a teacher presented scenarios describing different classroom situations and presented these to parent focus groups. This helped the parents rally around an issue important to their children's education.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Our purpose in preparing this report was to summarize and synthesize some of the important ideas that were exchanged at the Exploring Culture Institute in order to extend the conversation about cultural influences in education to a broader audience. Understanding culture in a more personalized way, as daily lived experiences rather than as abstract constructs, has been central to this effort. We have described five themes that are central to this particular effort to support teachers and teacher educators as they develop culturally responsive pedagogy in their teaching contexts. The five dominant themes are 1) exploring the ways that anthropologists and teachers can work together, 2) understanding culture as a process, 3) understanding the nature of conflict and power in considering the cultural aspects of education, 4) creating safe environments for discussion, and 5) educating for advocacy and activism. It is our hope that these themes provide helpful frames for teachers and teacher educators to enhance the role of culture in their understanding of teaching.

Institute participants generated many examples of ways that both teachers and students can learn about their own culture as well as the cultures of others. Suggestions for how cultural knowledge can be applied to curriculum, a term that we understand as being everything that goes on in a school from which students can gain either implicit or explicit learning, have been described in the final section. These applications can be implemented in working with parents and community and in developing advocacy agendas as well as in the classroom. The applications stem from the practice of the anthropologists and educators who attended the Institute and have been tested in their daily practice. We believe they can be adapted in a variety of educational settings.

We find George Spindler's observation, "The classroom is a microcosm of the whole culture" to be an apt conclusion to the ideas presented here. This deceptively simple thought provides both a warning and a challenge to us as teachers. It alerts us to the tremendous responsibility entrusted to us to influence the thinking of our students. It also empowers us to use our position for transformative purposes to create a more equitable society for our students.

NOTES

[1]Some aspects of the institute were documented in less detail than others, thus not all contributions are represented in this report as fully as we would have liked. For more information about the institute, see Appendix A.

[2]This concept was developed by George and Louise Spindler. Its application is the subject of *Pathways to Cultural Awareness: Cultural Therapy with Teachers and Students* (Spindler & Spindler, 1994). Some educators, while embracing the concept, are uncomfortable with the term *cultural therapy* because of its implied patient-therapist scenario.

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• Glesne provides advice for people beginning to do qualitative research on various methods of learning about culture, including conducting observations and open-ended interviews and using video, photographs, and archival documents. She also attends to the personal dimensions of learning about culture, such as establishing rapport.

González, N. (Ed.) (1995a). Educational innovation: Learning from households [Special issue]. *Practicing Anthropology, 17*(3).

• Participants in the Funds of Knowledge Project report on their ethnographic home visits and provide examples of how they applied the information to their classroom practice. Includes a commentary by Margaret Eisenhart.

González, N. (1995b). Processual approaches to multicultural education. *Journal of Applied Behavioral Science, 31*(3), 234-244.

• Explains why educators need to go beyond surface markers of culture, such as foods and holidays, to take into account the everyday lived experiences of students, and describes a model for doing so.

Hauser, M., Johnson, L., & Holm, G. (1993). Comparing classroom environments: Issues of cultural congruence. *Journal of Ethnodevelopment, 2*(2), 10-19.

• The social interaction, language behaviors, and participant structures of two first grade classrooms are examined. Two literacy lessons provide the context to understand ideas of culturally relevant pedagogy.

Heath, S. B. (1983). *Ways with words: Language, life and work in communities and classrooms*. New York: Cambridge University Press.

• An ethnography comparing how two communities —one working class white and one working class African American — socialize children in the uses of language and literacy.

Hornberger N. (1990). Creating successful learning contexts for bilingual literacy. *Teachers College Record, 92*(2), 212-229.

• A description of two teachers who are successfully creating a culturally responsive learning environment for bilingual literacy.

Jackson, P. (1968). *Life in classrooms*. New York: Holt, Rinehart and Winston.

• Jackson first explained the concept of the hidden curriculum in this volume.

Ladson Billings, G. (1994). *The dreamkeepers: Successful teachers of African American children*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey Bass.

• Profiles eight teachers whose practice of culturally relevant teaching allows students who would traditionally be considered at risk to be successful learners.

Lee, E. (1995). *Letters to Marcia: A teacher's guide to anti-racist education*. Toronto: Cross Cultural Communication Centre.

• Suggests ways in which teachers and schools can move beyond multiculturalism to take a more socially active stance against racism.

Lucas, T. (1997). *Into, through, and beyond secondary school: Critical transitions for immigrant youths*. McHenry, IL, and Washington, DC: Delta Systems and Center for Applied Linguistics.

• Among other things, Lucas takes up the issue of how changing conceptualizations of learners, teachers, and schools (e.g., the notion of students as active constructors of knowledge) may empower immigrant students but can also conflict with deeply held cultural beliefs about education.

Montagu, Ashley. 1997. *Man's most dangerous myth: The fallacy of race* (6th ed.). Walnut Creek, CA: Altamira.

• Originally published in 1942, this groundbreaking book exploded the notion that humankind is divided into genetically distinct races.

Nieto, S. (1992). *Affirming diversity: The sociopolitical context of multicultural education*. New York: Longman.

• How personal, social, political, cultural, and educational factors interact to affect the success or failure of students in our schools. Intervention strategies are supported by research and theory.

Rethinking schools, 1001 N. Keefe Ave., Milwaukee, WI 53212, rethink@execpc.com.

• A non-profit independent publication advocating the reform of public schools and concerned with issues of equity and social justice.

Spindler, G., & Spindler, L. (Eds.). (1994). *Pathways to cultural awareness: Cultural therapy with teachers and students*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin.

• The chapters in this volume are based on the assumption that when teachers better understand themselves as teachers, they will teach others better, especially those unlike themselves in ethnicity, social class, and culture.

Spindler, G., & Spindler, L. (1990). *The American cultural dialogue and its transmission.* New York: Falmer.

• Schooling as a means of cultural transmission is examined as well as a consideration of American culture as a process.

Tatum, B. (1997). *"Why are all the Black kids sitting together in the cafeteria?" and other conversations about race.* New York: Basic Books.

• Explains the development of racial identity in children and adolescents and how teachers can learn to think and talk about race and racism in ways that help students deal with racial identity issues.

Valdés, G. (1998). The world outside and inside schools: Language and immigrant children. *Educational Researcher, 27*(6), 4-18.

• Penetrating article about what it means to arrive at school without knowing English and how the policy and instructional environments that currently exist in the United States hinder educational progress for many children.

Wolcott, H. (1991). Propriospect and the acquisition of culture. *Anthropology and Education Quarterly, 22*(3), 251-273.

• Wolcott attempts to deal with the fact that no one really acquires culture, because culture itself is an abstraction. He argues that we acquire instead a unique version of culture that is rooted in our own individual and social experience.

Appendix A:

About The Exploring Culture Institute

In 1996, the Council on Anthropology and Education, a unit of the American Anthropological Association, offered to sponsor an event at their annual meeting to reach out to local teachers. ARC Associates, a non-profit organization in Oakland (CA) dedicated to improving educational opportunities for diverse learners, submitted a proposal to organize this event. When the proposal was accepted, ARC sought and received additional support from CREDE (The Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence) and San Francisco State University, as well as from local anthropologists and educators who were willing to volunteer their time as presenters and facilitators. In addition, Mary Hauser volunteered to coordinate the documentation of the event, because she believed it would be important to have a record of what went on. The two-day institute that resulted from these efforts was attended by over 100 educators and anthropologists. Subsequent funding to produce this monograph came from the Council on Anthropology and Education and the Center for Research on Education, Diversity & Excellence.

The purpose of the Exploring Culture Institute was to create a space for anthropologists and teachers to dialogue and learn from each other about culture, a topic of deep interest to both groups. Teachers who work in culturally and lingusitically diverse settings are faced with the dilemma of making instruction "culturally responsive" for all students while not favoring one group in particular. The Institute addressed such questions as: How can teachers know enough about each student's cultural background to meet the needs of both the individual student and the diverse group? What strategies can teachers use to connect with students and their families? What insights can educational anthropologists bring to the classroom? What insights can teachers bring to educational anthropologists?

Appendix B:

Give One/Get One: Sample Handout

A. Write (or draw, or think) by yourself for _____ minutes putting down *at least* three answers to the following question:

What do you think of when you hear the term "culture"?

1. _____
_____

2. _____
_____

3. _____
_____

4. _____
_____

5. _____
_____

B. Now get up and walk around. Give an idea from your list to another person—preferably someone you DON'T know very well—and get an idea from their list to add to your own. Write down the other person's name next to their idea. You have _____ minutes.

1. _____
_____

Name _____

2. _____
_____

Name _____

3. _____
_____

Name _____

4. _____
_____

Name _____

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RR3 *Becoming Bilingual in the Amigos Two-Way Immersion Program,* by Mary T. Cazabon, Elena Nicoladis, & Wallace E. Lambert, 1998

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Directories *Secondary Newcomer Programs in the United States: 1996-97 Directory,* by Deborah J. Short & Beverly A. Boyson, 1997

Secondary Newcomer Programs in the United States: 1997-98 Supplement, Deborah J. Short & Beverly A. Boyson, 1998

Two-Way Bilingual Immersion Programs in the United States: 1997-1998 Supplement, by Cathleen McCargo & Donna Christian, 1998

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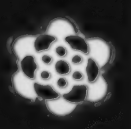

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